

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 10, 2015

Agenda Item: Waters Approved for Commercial Bait Seining Annual Rule

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Minutes

Background

A bait fish seining license is required for: 1) persons 15 years of age and older to seine for and transport bait fish for commercial purposes in Montana; and 2) for any person who seines for and has in their possession more than 24 dozen non-game bait fish. The Commission may designate waters that are allowed for these purposes, and FWP describes these waters annually in the Commercial Bait Seining Application form.

FWP proposed a list of waters for the 2016 fishing season that was approved for public comment by the Commission on Oct. 8. The list was unchanged from waters approved for commercial bait seining in 2015.

Public Involvement Process & Results

After Commission approval, the proposed list of commercial bait seining waters was released for public comment. The comment period ran Oct. 14-Nov. 19. No comments were received.

Alternatives and Analysis.

- Approve the proposed list: The proposed list is identical to waters approved for Commercial Bait Seining in 2015. FWP has evaluated and concur that these waters can sustain continued harvest for these purposes.
- Modify the list: The Commission can adjust or modify the list at their discretion. FWP has no recommendation concerning such potential changes.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the proposed list be approved for the 2016 fishing season. Evaluation by biologists and Fisheries program managers confirmed that waters in the current list can still support commercial bait seining, as previously approved by the Commission. The list is already in effect: With no biological need to change the list, maintaining it through the 2016 fishing season provides continuity that should benefit angler understanding.

Proposed Motion

I move that the Commission approve the Commercial Bait Fish Seining Waters list recommended by FWP for the 2016 fishing season.